



MAR.
NO. 397

15¢



Detective Comics presents **BATMAN** and **BATGIRL**



OUT OF MY WAY,
BATMAN!

NOT EVEN YOU
CAN STOP ME
FROM JOINING
HER!

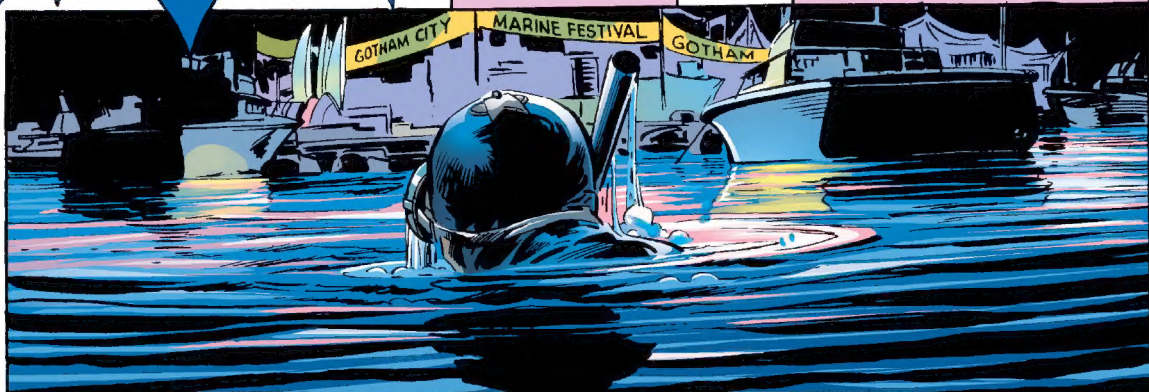


"PAINT A PICTURE
OF PERIL!"

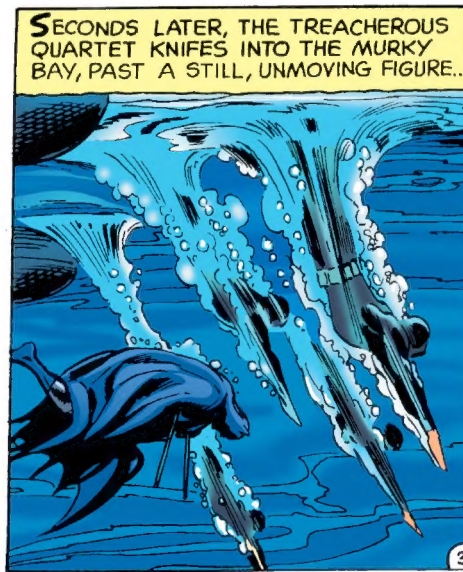
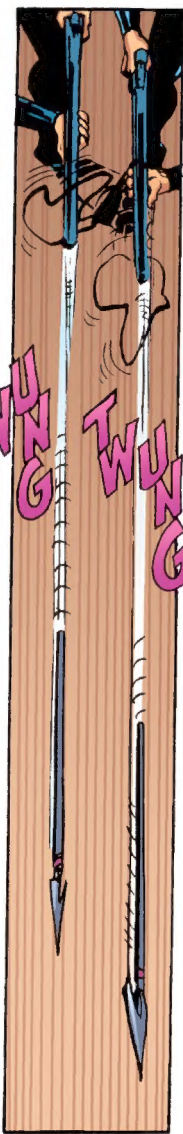
A GENTLE TWILIGHT AT **GOTHAM BAY**... A STILLNESS BROKEN ONLY BY DISTANT ECHOES FROM THE NEARBY STREETS AND THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE SEA. IT IS THE EVE BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE ANNUAL **MARINE FESTIVAL**--AN EVENT THAT POURS MILLIONS INTO WORTHY CHARITIES... AN EVENT THAT NOW BRINGS FROM THE DEPTHS-- **EVIL!**

STORY BY: DENNY O'NEIL

ART BY: NEAL ADAMS & DICK GIORDANO





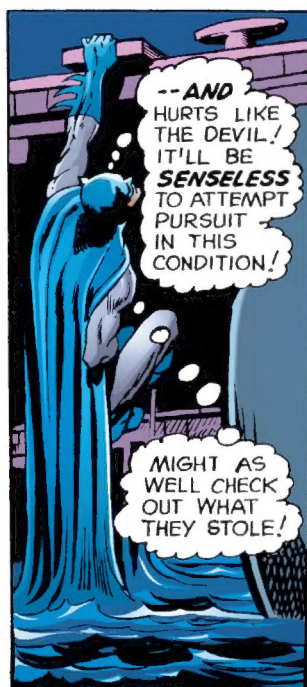


THEN, THE CAPED MANHUNTER **STIRS**... AND BEGINS TO SLOWLY STROKE TOWARD THE SURFACE...

I **ALMOST** DODGED THEIR SPEARS... MOVED MY BODY BEHIND THE CAPE TO AVOID THE POINTS...

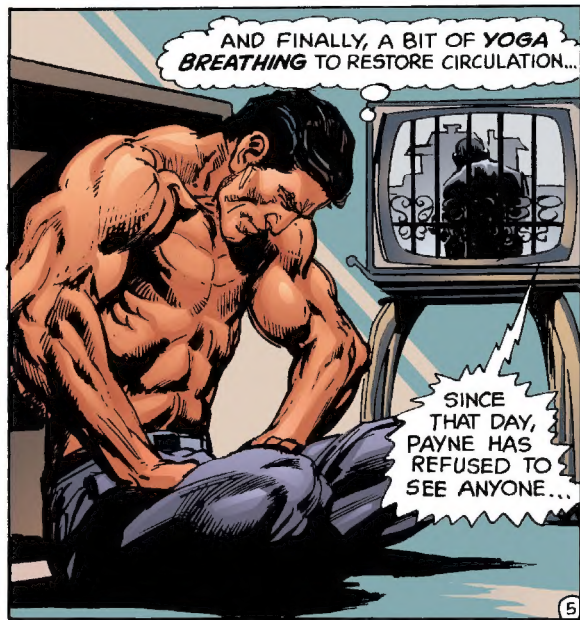
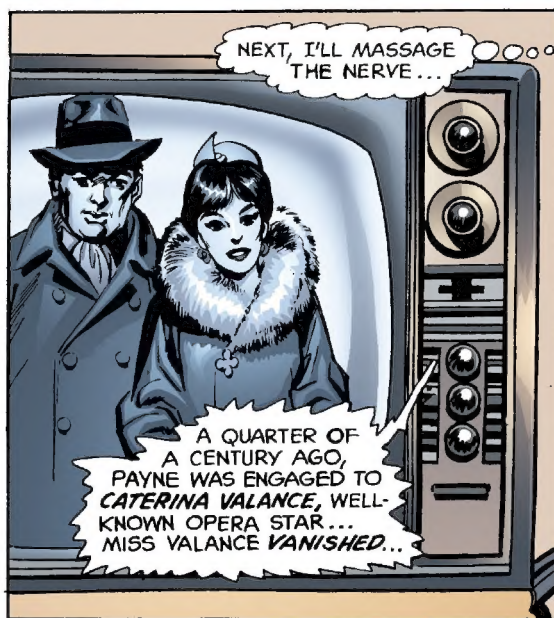
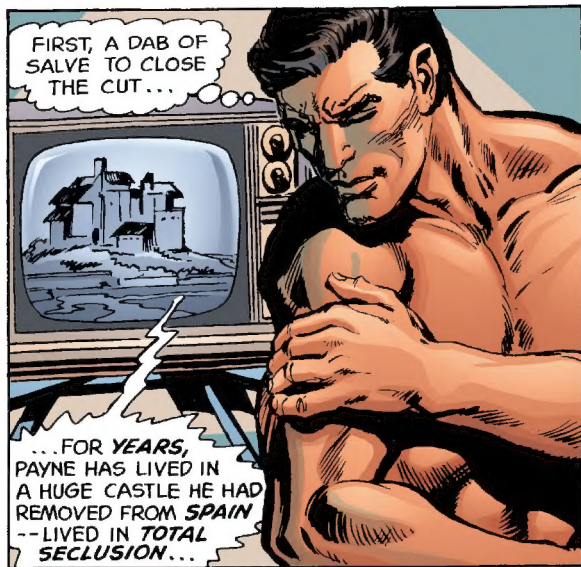
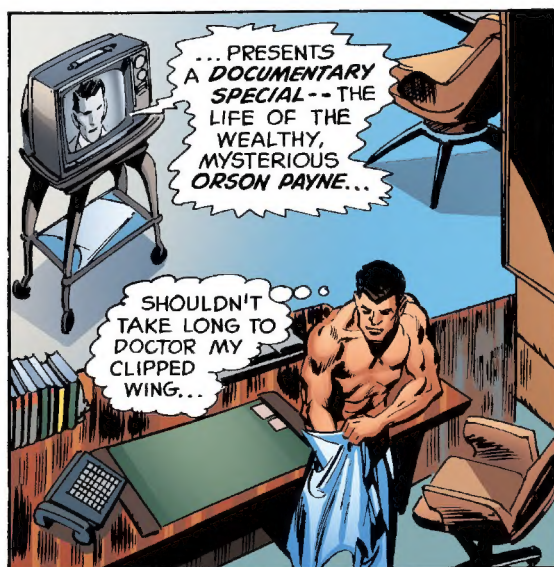
ALMOST... BUT NOT **QUITE!** ONE OF THEM JABBED A NERVE CENTER IN MY UPPER ARM...

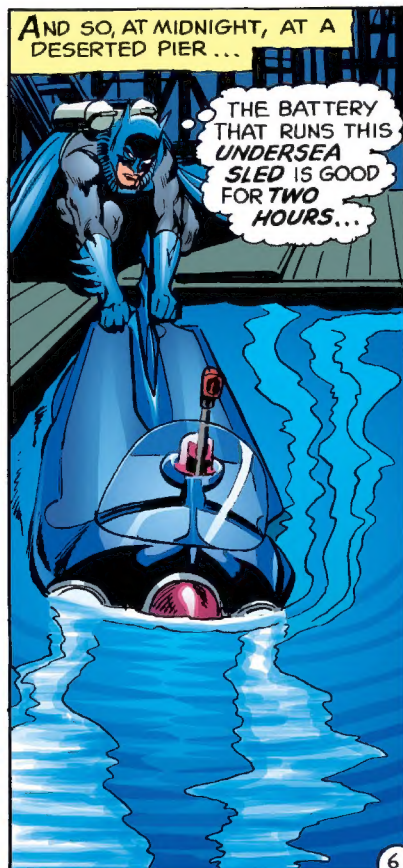
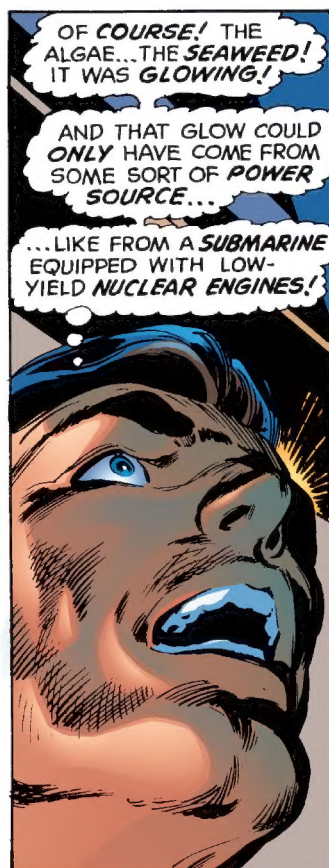
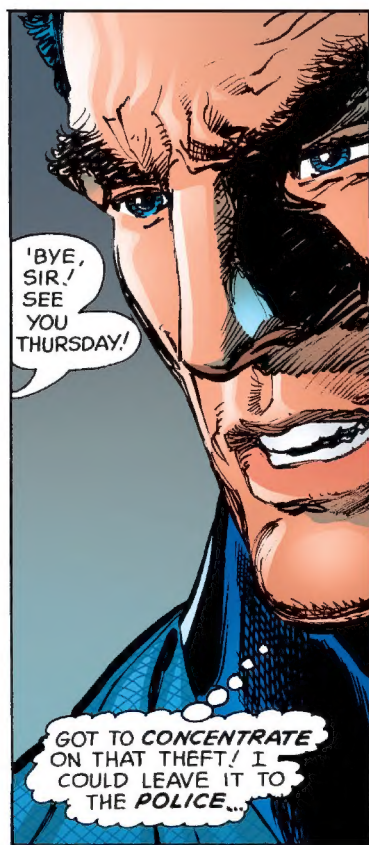
IT'LL BE OKAY IN A DAY OR SO --BUT MEANWHILE, THE ARM IS **USELESS**--

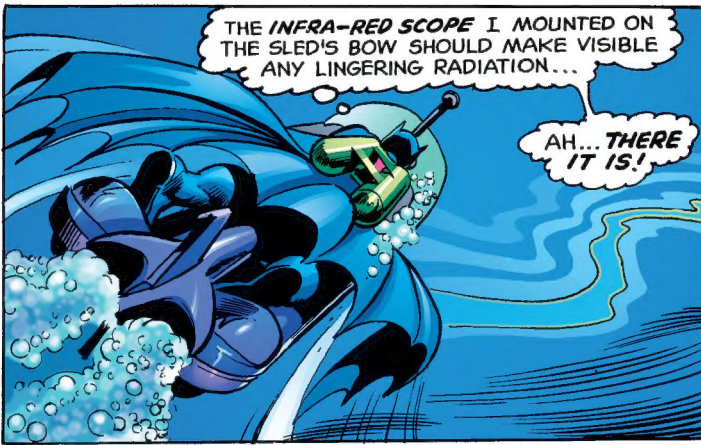


SWIFTLY, THE **COWLED CRUSADER** CHANGES TO STREET CLOTHES-- AND HIS OTHER IDENTITY, THAT OF **BRUCE WAYNE**, MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST-- AND RETURNS AT HIS MID-TOWN PENTHOUSE...



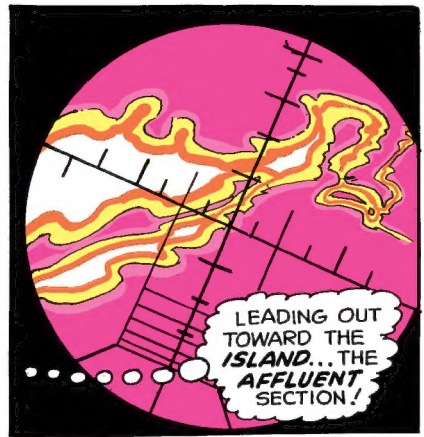




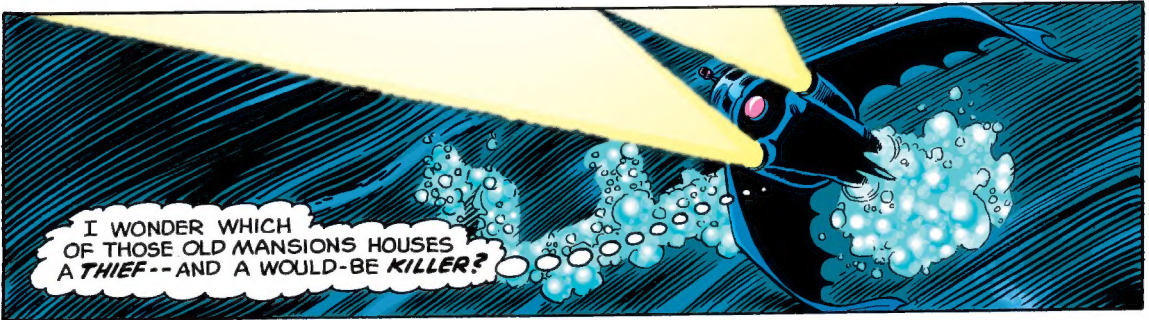


THE **INFRA-RED SCOPE** I MOUNTED ON THE SLED'S BOW SHOULD MAKE VISIBLE ANY LINGERING RADIATION...

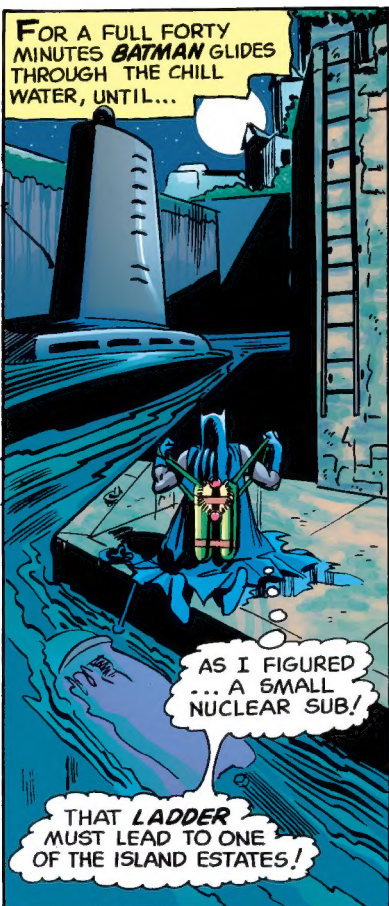
AH... **THERE IT IS!**



LEADING OUT TOWARD THE **ISLAND...THE AFFLUENT SECTION!**



I WONDER WHICH OF THOSE OLD MANSIONS HOUSES A **THIEF**-- AND A **WOULD-BE KILLER**?



FOR A FULL FORTY MINUTES **BATMAN** GLIDES THROUGH THE CHILL WATER, UNTIL...

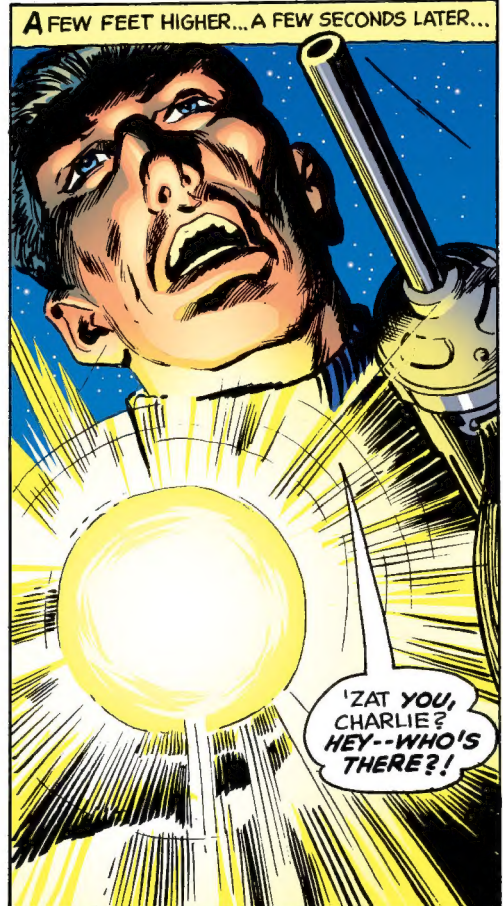
AS I FIGURED... A **SMALL NUCLEAR SUB!**

THAT **LADDER** MUST LEAD TO ONE OF THE ISLAND ESTATES!



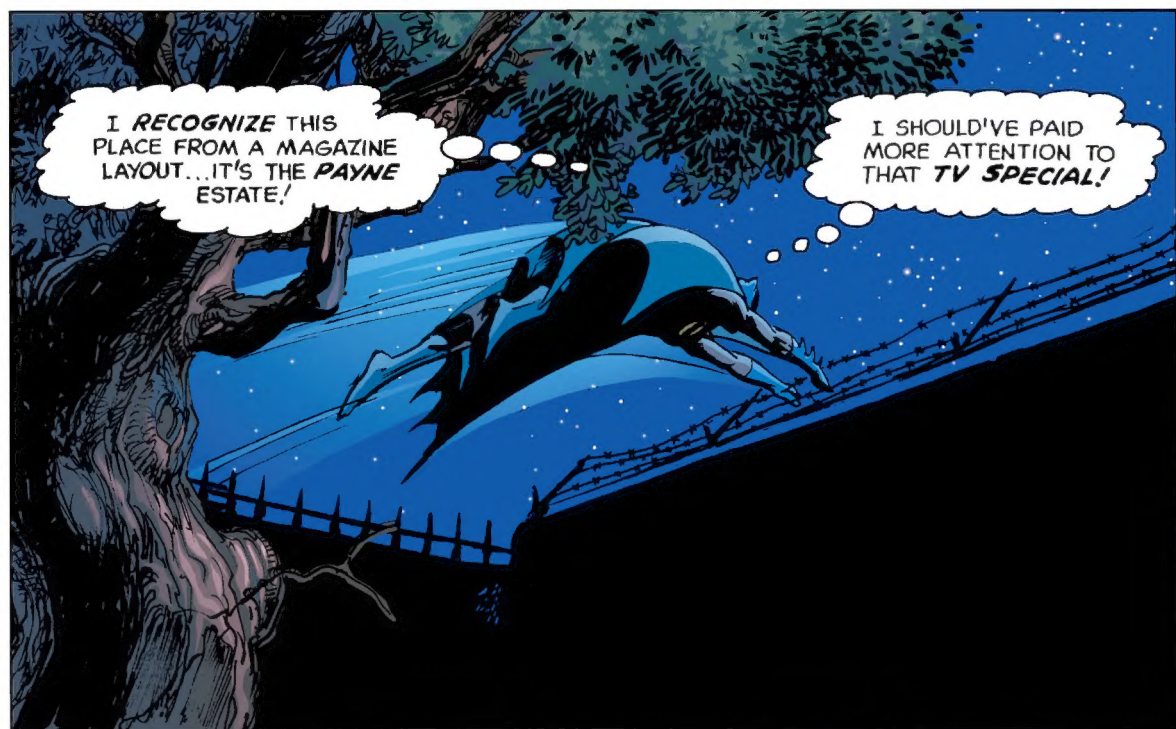
WHOEVER SET THIS UP MUST HAVE **MILLIONS** TO SQUANDER!

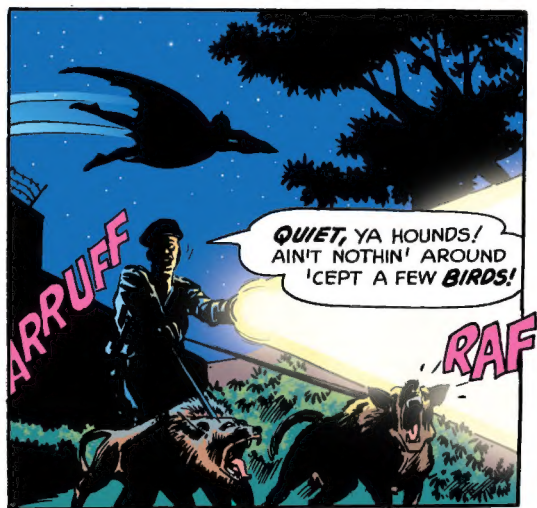
I'M NEAR THE **TOP**-- AND PROBABLY A FEW **THUGS!**



A FEW FEET HIGHER... A FEW SECONDS LATER...

'ZAT YOU, CHARLIE? **HEY--WHO'S THERE?!**





QUIET, YA HOUNDS!
AIN'T NOTHIN' AROUND
'CEPT A FEW *BIRDS!*

ARRUFF

RAF



PAYNE'S
CASTLE!
RATHER THAN
DROP TO THE GROUND
AND CHANCE A RUN-IN
WITH THOSE KILLER
DOGS, I'LL ...



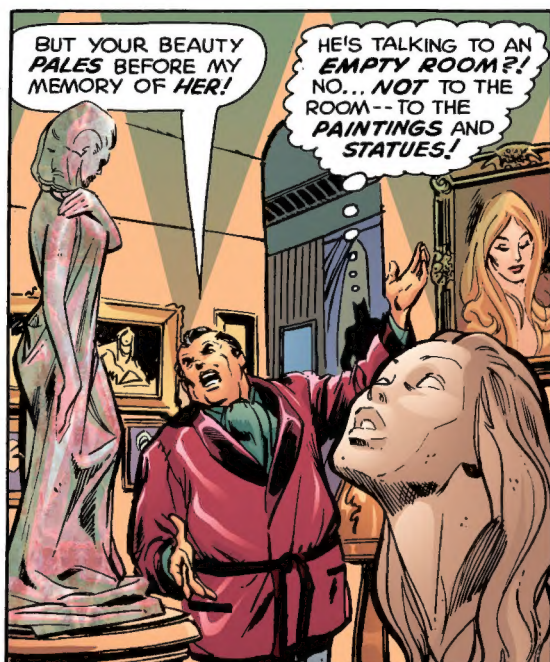
WITH A TREMENDOUS PUSH OF HIS
THICK-THEWED LEGS, **BATMAN**
LAUNCHES HIMSELF ACROSS THE
REMAINING TWENTY FEET OF OPEN SPACE...

CABLE-STRONG FINGERS CLAMP
ONTO THE SLIPPERY STONE
WINDOW SILL...



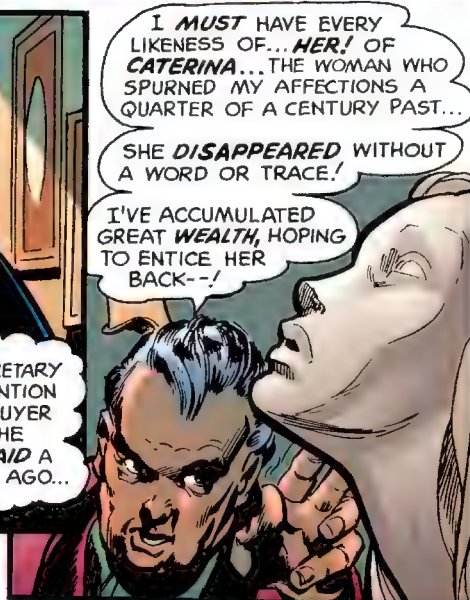
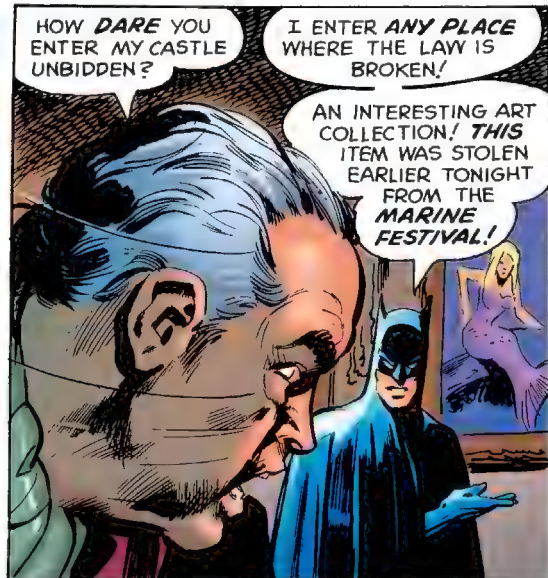
THAT
MUST BE
PAYNE
HIMSELF...

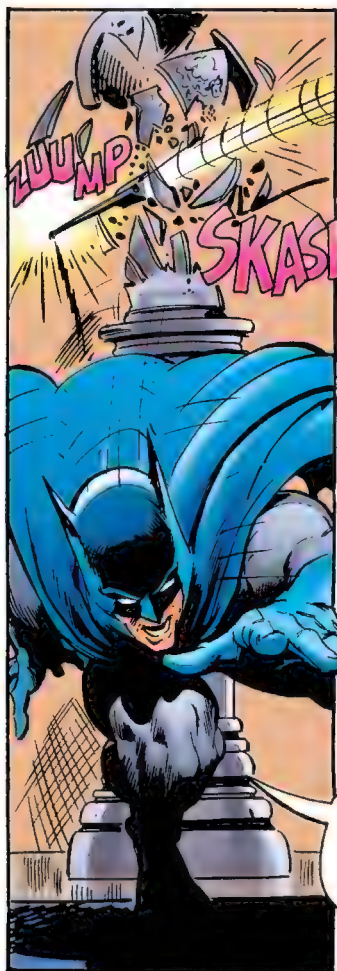
YES, MY
DEARS, YOU
ARE LOVELY--
EVERY ONE
OF YOU!



BUT YOUR BEAUTY
PALES BEFORE MY
MEMORY OF *HER!*

HE'S TALKING TO AN
*EMPTY ROOM?! NO... NOT TO THE
ROOM-- TO THE
PAINTINGS AND
STATUES!*





PAYNE...
YOU'RE **SICK--**
TERRIBLY
SICK! I'LL
HELP YOU!

FIRST
YOU'LL
HAVE TO
CATCH ME!

THERE ARE
LITERALLY
HUNDREDS
OF OBJECTS
HE COULD
BE HIDING
BEHIND! IT'D
TAKE ALL
NIGHT
TO SEARCH
THIS
CHAMBER!

SO
I'LL
HAVE TO
PLAY IT
THE **RISKY**
WAY... MAKE
MYSELF A
TEMPTING
TARGET!

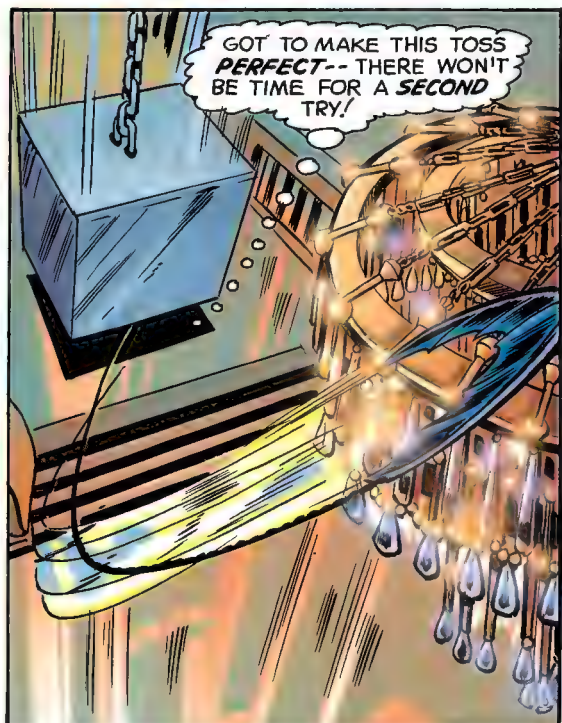
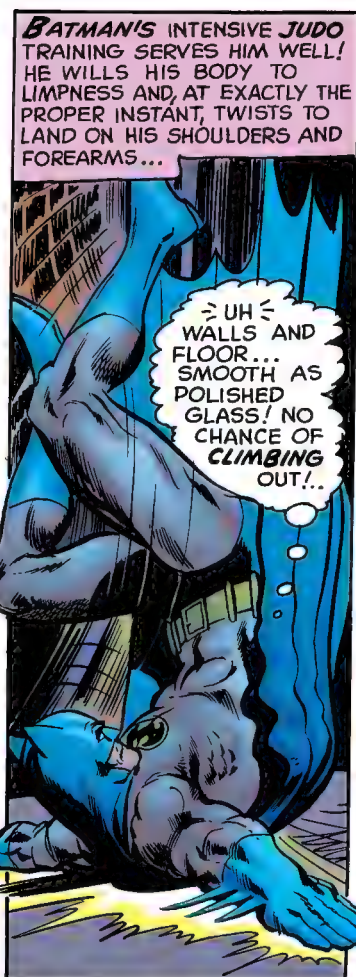
SHOW
YOURSELF,
PAYNE! DON'T
MAKE THINGS
WORSE...

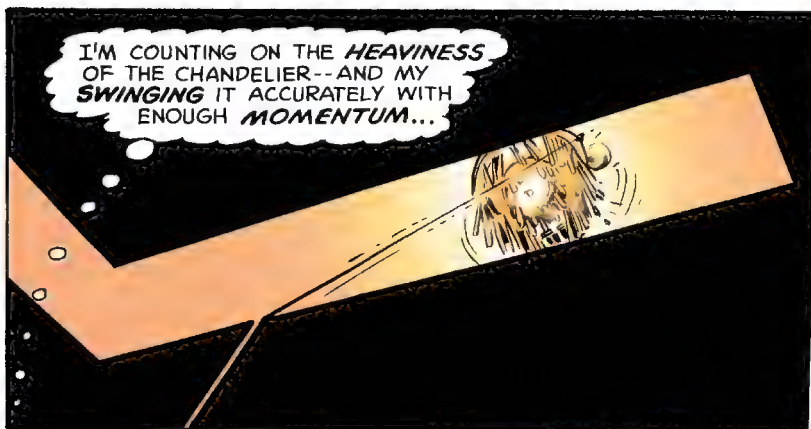


YOU THINK ME **INSANE?**
THEN I SHALL **REJOICE**
IN MY **INSANITY--**

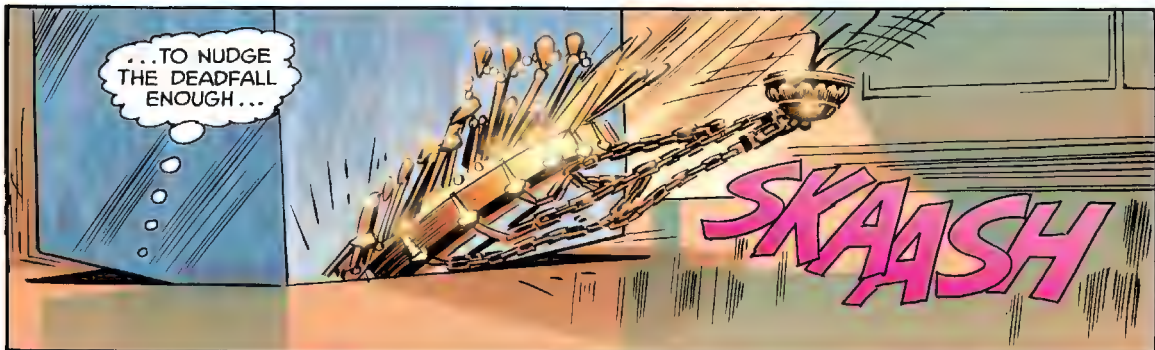
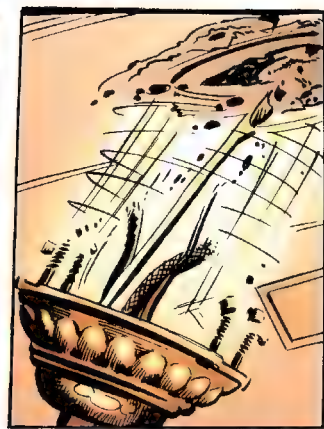
-- AND IN YOUR
DEATH!

THE SPANISH DUKE
WHO ORIGINALLY
BUILT THIS FORTRESS
HAD AN **INSIDIOUS**
MIND...





I'M COUNTING ON THE **HEAVINESS**
OF THE CHANDELIER--AND MY
SWINGING IT ACCURATELY WITH
ENOUGH **MOMENTUM**...



...TO NUDGE
THE DEADFALL
ENOUGH...

SKAASH



DID
IT!
THE REST
IS
ROUTINE...



WHAT THEY
SAY OF YOU
IS **TRUE**...
YOU'RE NO
MAN...YOU'RE
SOME--
THING!

GIVE UP,
PAYNE--
FOR YOUR
OWN **GOOD!**

NO...
NO--



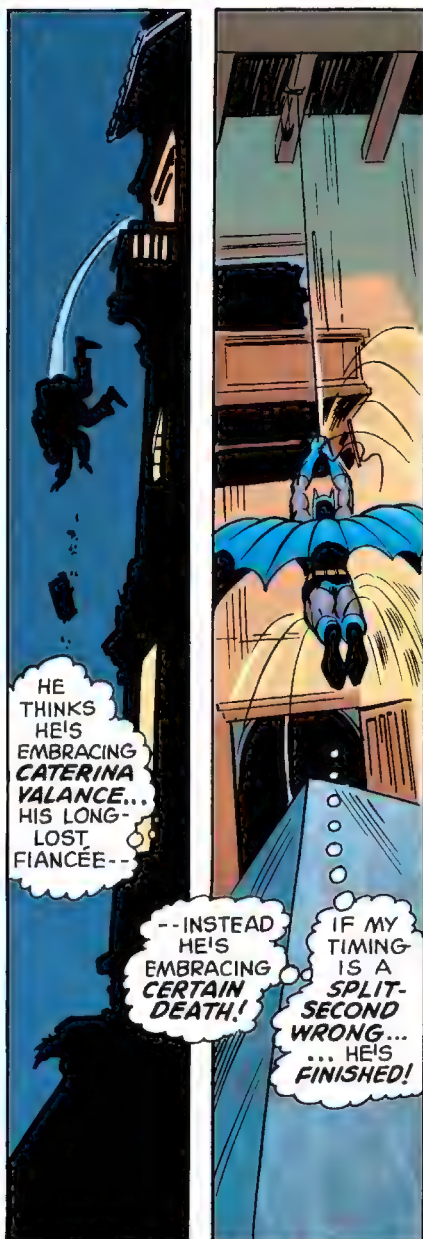
YOU ALWAYS
WANTED ME TO
GIVE UP... TO
ABANDON MY
AMBITION... BUT
WHY CAN'T YOU
UNDERSTAND?

EVERYTHING I
DID WAS FOR
YOU!

GOOD
LORD!
HIS LAST
REMAINING
BIT OF
SANITY
IS **GONE!**



-- COME TO ME, MY
PRECIOUS! TAKE ME
IN YOUR ARMS!



HE
THINKS
HE'S
EMBRACING
CATERINA
VALANCE...
HIS LONG-
LOST
FIANCEE--

--INSTEAD
HE'S
EMBRACING
CERTAIN
DEATH!

IF MY
TIMING
IS A
SPLIT-
SECOND
WRONG...
... HE'S
FINISHED!



GNN--

GOT HIM...
BUT I TOOK
THE STRAIN OF
HIS FALL ON
MY BAD ARM...

OH, THANK YOU, THANK YOU
FOR RETURNING TO ME,
BELOVED CATERINA ...

I'LL
FIND A
PHONE...
CALL COMMISSIONER
GORDON... GET
THIS POOR,
TORTURED SOUL
THE HELP HE NEEDS...

I'M **THROUGH** FIGHTING
FOR TONIGHT... AND SO
IS PAYNE...

THE PAIN IN MY ARM
WILL SOON HEAL... I HOPE
PAYNE'S AGONY CAN BE SOOTHED, TOO!



BATGIRL

IN: THE HOLLOW MAN

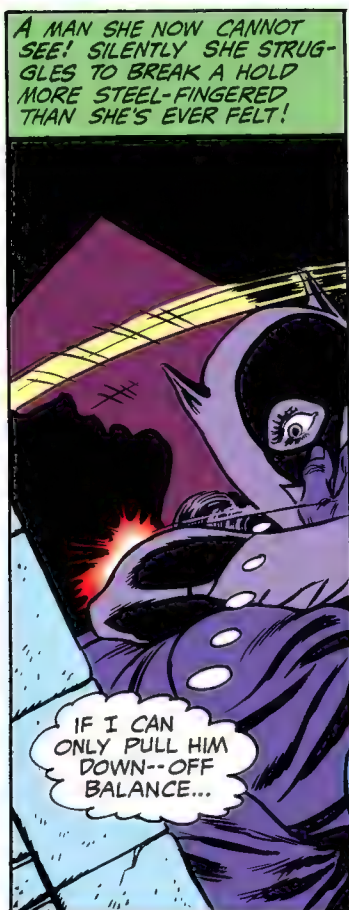
STORY:
FRANK ROBBINS

ART:
GIL KANE &
MURPHY ANDERSON

A STARTLED CRY MUFFLED BY A POWERFUL HAND...AND BATGIRL IS BROUGHT INTO SUDDEN CONTACT WITH THE MAN SHE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR...



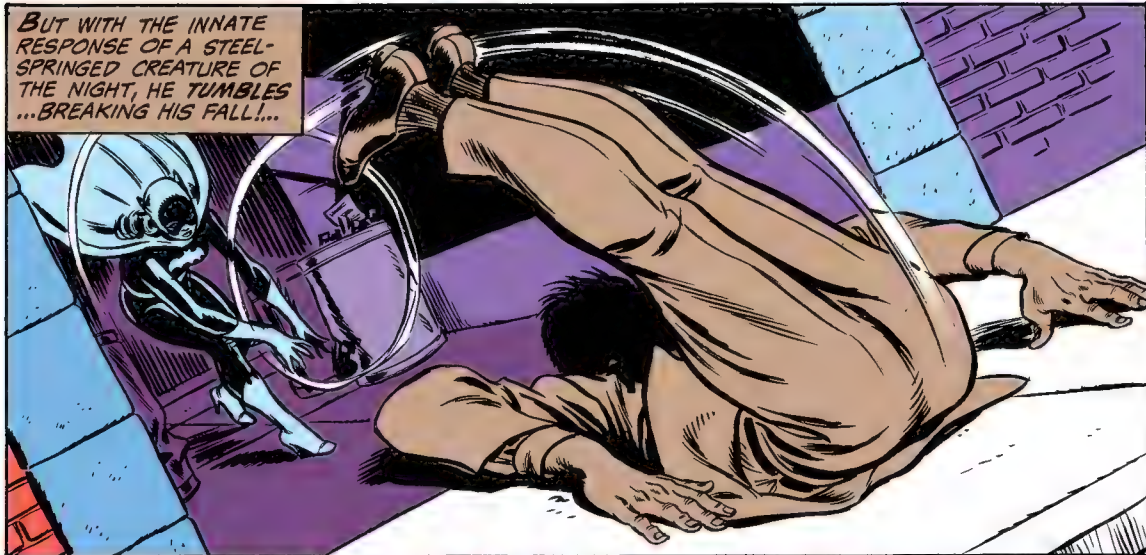
A MAN SHE NOW CANNOT SEE! SILENTLY SHE STRUGGLES TO BREAK A HOLD MORE STEEL-FINGERED THAN SHE'S EVER FELT!



IF I CAN ONLY PULL HIM DOWN--OFF BALANCE...



*BUT WITH THE INNATE
RESPONSE OF A STEEL-
SPRINGED CREATURE OF
THE NIGHT, HE TUMBLES
...BREAKING HIS FALL!...*



*THEN, AS
HE RECOUPES,
READY TO
STRIKE
AGAIN...FOR
THE FIRST
TIME
BATGIRL
SEES HER
ATTACKER!*

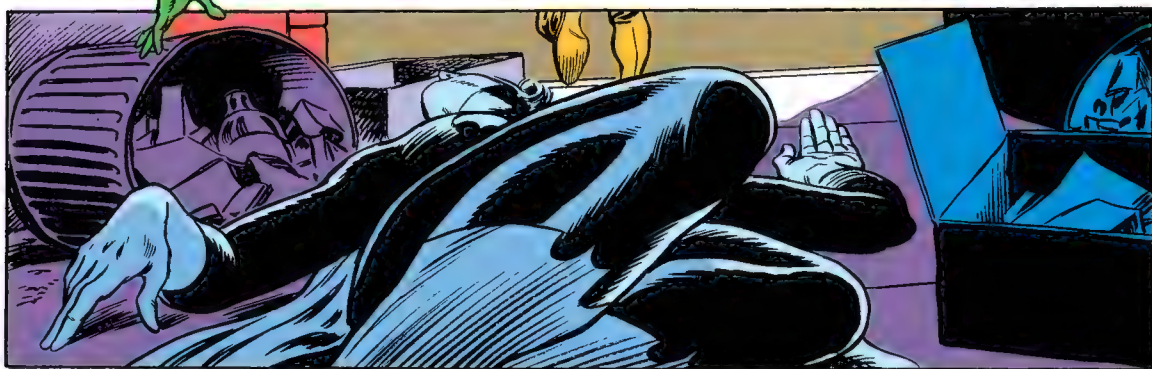
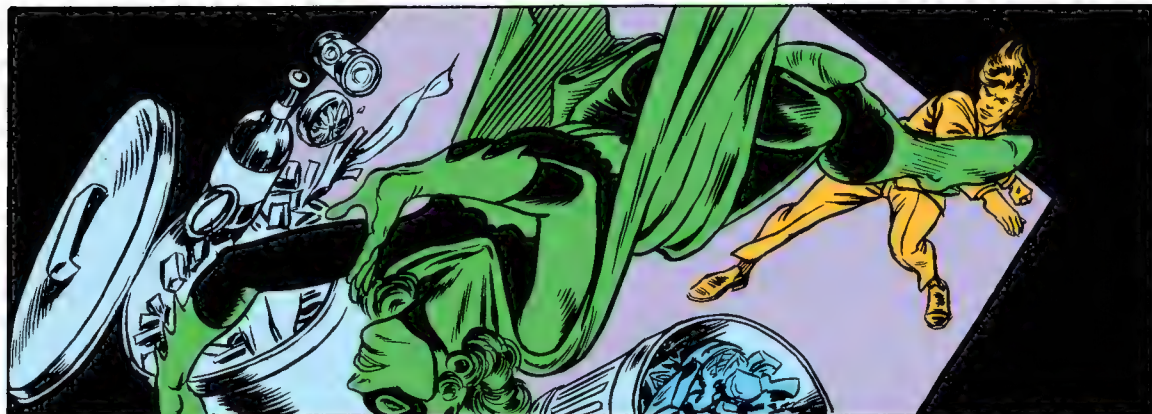


...MAX!?



*MOMENTARILY
FROZEN BY
THE SHOCKING
REALIZATION
THAT THE MYSTERY
KILLER IS NOT
HER COM-
PUTER-MADE
DATE... SHE
GIVES HER
OPPONENT
THE OPENING
HE NEEDS!*





A DEADLY
SILENCE REIGNS
--BROKEN AT
LAST BY A
GENTLE PATTING
OF HER FACE ...



Y-YOU ?!

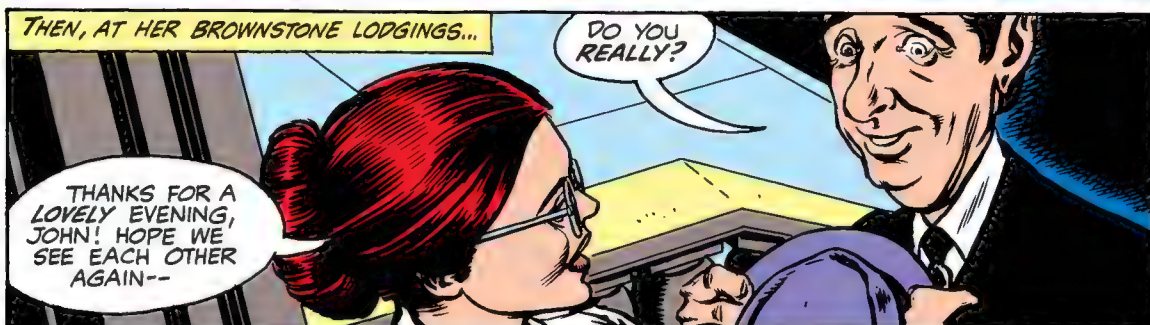
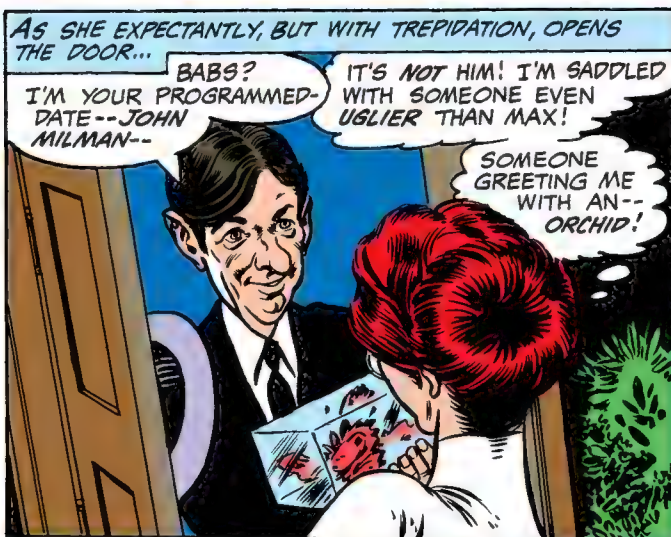


MAX?! YOU--
SAVED ME ?



TWO NIGHTS LATER... AS BABS RESUMES HER "HOMELY" VIGIL...

MY SECOND COMPUTER-DATE! HARD TO TELL WHETHER HIS VOICE ON THE PHONE WAS THAT OF THE RED-HEADED KILLER! WILL HE GREET ME WITH AN--ORCHID? AS MAX DIDN'T...



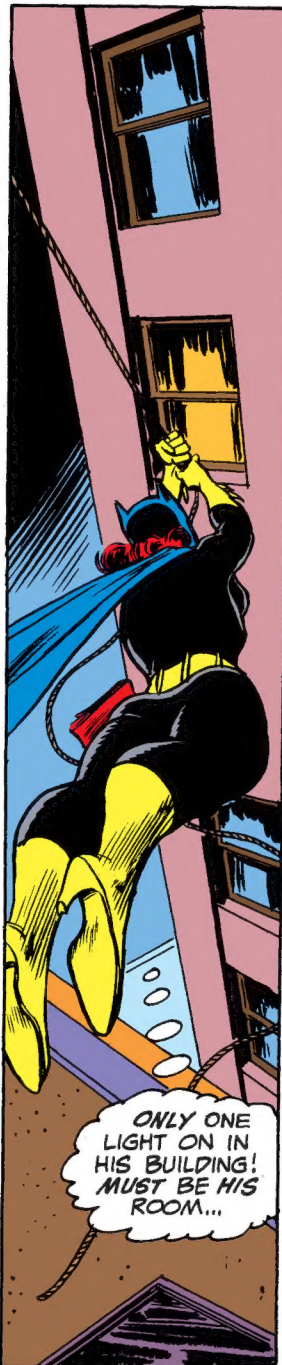




MOMENTS
LATER, BABS,
AS BATGIRL,
SCOOT'S OUT
THE ROOF-
DOOR AND...



"JOHN MILMAN'S" COMPUTER-
ADDRESS IS A FEW BLOCKS
AWAY--IF HE'S STILL
THERE!



ONLY ONE
LIGHT ON IN
HIS BUILDING!
MUST BE HIS
ROOM...



IT IS--AND
PACKING TO
LEAVE!



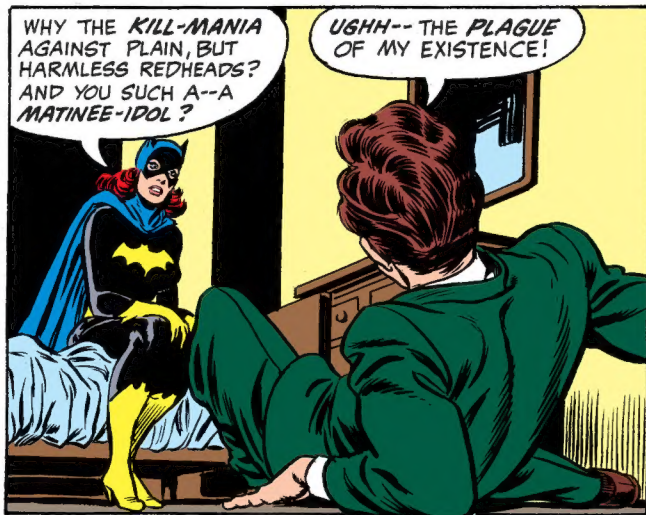
WHA--? THE HANDSOME
"MUGGER"!

AND THAT MASK
CLUTCHED IN HIS HAND--
"UGLY" JOHN MILMAN!



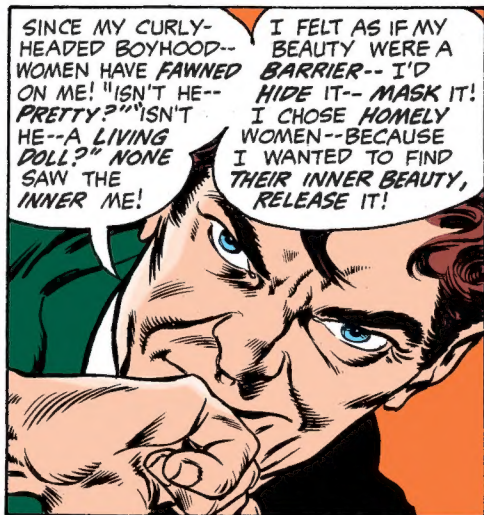
ANOTHER MASK--
"HOMELY" MAX
TOURNOV!

ALL THREE--
THE SAME
MAN!



WHY THE *KILL-MANIA* AGAINST PLAIN, BUT HARMLESS REDHEADS? AND YOU SUCH A--A *MATINEE-IDOL*?

UGHH-- THE *PLAGUE* OF MY EXISTENCE!



SINCE MY CURLY-HEADED BOYHOOD-- WOMEN HAVE *FAWNED* ON ME! "ISN'T HE-- *PRETTY?*" "ISN'T HE--A *LIVING DOLL?*" *NONE* SAW THE *INNER ME!*

I FELT AS IF MY BEAUTY WERE A *BARRIER--* I'D *HIDE IT-- MASK IT!* I CHOSE *HOMELY* WOMEN--BECAUSE I WANTED TO FIND *THEIR INNER BEAUTY, RELEASE IT!*



LIKE YOU TRIED TO "*RELEASE*" *MINE--* IN THAT ALLEY?

OH-H, *NO!* JUST WANTED TO *SCARE* YOU OFF--YOU'RE TOO *BEAUTIFUL TO DIE!*



BUT *THEY* WERE ALL *HOLLOW* INSIDE-- *SHALLOW!* ALL OF THEM--*FRAGILE ORCHIDS!*

SO YOU *CRUSHED* THEM! AND YET YOU *DEMANDED* THEY HAVE *RED* HAIR--BECAUSE THAT WAS THE *SUPERFICIAL* BEAUTY YOU REQUIRED! YOU ARE THE *HOLLOW MAN--*FINDING *UGLINESS* IN EVERYTHING! THINK ABOUT *THAT* WHEN YOU SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE-- BEHIND PRISON BARS!

THE END